

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

UNCLAS YEREVAN 000687

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR INR/R/MR-STHIBEAULT, EUR/PPD-MLOGSDON AND  
SRUEDY, EUR/CACEN-ESIDEREAS, EUR, EUR/ACE, EUR/SNEC,  
EUR/SE

E.O. 12958; N/A

TAGS: [KMDR](#) [OPRC](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KPAO](#) [AM](#)

SUBJECT: REACTION FROM YEREVAN, ARMENIA: TRAIN BOMBINGS  
IN MADRID

1. SUMMARY: Armenian media widely covered the terrorist bombing in Madrid. The reports on TV and in the press were mainly factual. The only article with commentaries was published in "Hayots Ashkhar" newspaper. The following is the summary of the article. END SUMMARY

WHO DOES AZNAR SUPPORT?

2. Dashnak-affiliated HAYOTS ASHKHAR newspaper (03/18) published an article discussing the terrorist acts in Madrid. "The terrorist acts in the Spanish capital were shocking in their brutality and enormous scale, and their cold-blooded and appalling planning. More than 200 people were killed and some 1,500 people received various types of injuries. Only Al Qaida operates like this, without any regard for sex or age, without considering the amount of guilt of the victims. The most terrible thing about this terrorist act was its predictability. Of course, no one could have predicted the exact day and place of the terrorist act, nor could anyone predict exactly how the terrorists would strike Spain, but no one ever doubted that something like this would happen. When the media reported about the tragedy in Madrid, no one doubted who was responsible for it. No one, except... the Spanish government." "Starting from their very first public statements, top government officials unhesitatingly blamed the military wing of the Basque separatists, ETA, for the blasts." "By blaming the Basques, the Spanish authorities were moving the suspicion away from themselves, since there is no doubt at all that regular Spanish citizens are currently paying a price for their government's shortsighted and audacious policy." "Doubtless, the roots of the current tragedy go back to the time when the ambitious [Prime Minister] Aznar decided to ignore the UN Security Council's opinion and enter the Anglo-American alliance [in Iraq]." "The secret of this shortsightedness" [meaning the government's insistence that ETA was responsible for the blasts] is clear: Spain was going to hold parliamentary elections three days after the terrorist acts, after which, according to the Spanish Constitution, the current Prime Minister could no longer occupy this post. The farsighted Aznar had already found a replacement for himself when he appointed M. Rajo (sp.) to lead the Popular Party and he was hoping for a quiet life afterwards. However, the terrorist acts clearly demonstrated the dangers of Aznar's audacious policy and cast serious doubts on his party's victory in the upcoming elections." "The results of the Spanish elections are already known to our readers. The Popular Party lost, despite the fact that, even a week before the elections, they were widely expected to win. The Spanish people can forgive stupidity, but not lying."

WALKER